

CHANGE YOUR BATTERIES! Protecting your family from fatal fires or carbon monoxide is as easy as changing the batteries to your smoke and CO2 detectors when you move your clocks back each autumn. If you forgot, though, no worries. You still have a few days to swap out the batteries before your furnace goes into high gear for the winter.



GAZEBOEXPRESS

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENT SOURCE FOR THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND • NOVEMBER 2015

IRONING OUT 911 WRINKLES

Fire Chief Bill Timmer would have given the county's consolidated dispatch center a solid 'B' until an incident that showcased flaws in the system left an elderly Griffith man dead.

An emergency dispatcher was fired and other dispatchers retested for competency following the Oct. 26 incident. According to reports, an incorrect number entered into the system meant an ambulance request for a man who was having trouble breathing was delayed by 47 minutes.

Timmer, who serves as Highland's liaison to Lake County 911, said there had been only a few bumps in the system prior to the incident.

"The system broke down in the worst way," he said. "It cannot happen again."

The central dispatch center opened in early October and functions as a county-wide replacement for what had been individual dispatch centers in each of the county's cities and town.

Timmer said if residents run into any issue with the dispatch system, they should contact the town immediately.

"Our ambulances respond really quickly," he said. "If you call 911 and don't receive prompt service, please call again. If possible, it is always best to call from a land line, which provides first responders with your specific location." 🐦

THE 411 ON 911 ...

Although the dispatching function for police, fire and ambulance have become part of the county's unified call center, it will be Highland police and fire who respond to your call.



CALL 911 to request all police, fire or medical services — both emergency and nonemergency.



CALL 911 to report or cancel an activated alarm at a home or business. Alarm companies must call the 911 center at (219) 755-6546 for a confidential phone number to report an active alarm.



CALL (219) 838-3184 to speak directly with a Highland police officer. The department will remain staffed 24/7 to take recovered property, make reports, monitor e-bay/Craigslist transactions as well as parental custody transfers.

SIGN UP FOR NIXLE ...

Alerts for power outages, severe weather and road closures are all part of the package when you sign up for Nixle Emergency Notifications.

The service is free and allows residents to create an account that provides secure messaging by locale. In the event of an emergency, police send out details via text message, email — or both.

INFO: Visit highlandpolice.com or register online at www.nixle.com.

BEWARE HAWK ATTACKS

Since the first report that hawks were dive-bombing small pets near Homestead Park, Superintendent Alex Brown said he has been receiving reports of hawks scouting for prey at other parks. "This is their nature. All hawks are protected and no one should behave aggressively toward them," Brown said. "We just want residents to be aware they should watch their small pets even in their backyards."

WEATHER SIREN TESTING

The town wants to make it easier to determine the difference between a weather siren test and the real deal.

Weather siren testing occurs on the first Saturday of each month at noon. If a severe weather watch or warning is in effect for Lake County prior to 10 a.m. on a scheduled test date, the sirens will not be tested that day. A siren activated during a weather event sounds for 3 to 5 minutes at 10 to 15 minutes intervals until the threat has diminished.



... TOWN TICKER ...

Scheeringa Farms & Produce has been named one of the "30 Perfect Pumpkin Patches in Indiana You Need to Know About," by The Blog for Lifestyle & Travel. Visit www.highland.in.gov - to learn more.

TOMFOOLERY SHOW TO RAISE MONEY FOR TOWN THEATRE

The Tomfoolery Show is making a return performance with new comedic talent and live music to raise operating funds for the Town Theatre.

Redevelopment Director Cecile Petro said she hopes the community is looking forward to another night of side-splitting fun.

"We were sold out more than a week before the last show and are looking forward to another great event," Petro said. "We are still looking for

volunteers and silent auction items to make this event even more successful."

Comedians tapped for the fund-raiser include: Marci DeLoney, Lucky Luciano and Joe Nuccio with music provided by rock band, Nick Danger.

The first fund-raiser along with the membership drive has brought in about \$35,000. The group has established a goal to raise \$100,000 per year to support operations at a renovated theatre. 🐦

BUILD THE TOWN

WHEN: 8 p.m. **NOV. 13.**

Doors open at 7 p.m.

WHERE: Villa Cesare, Schererville

ADMISSION: \$25. Tickets available at the door or in advance at town hall or tomfooleryfunclub.com.

INFO: To volunteer, donate a silent auction item or sponsor the event, please call Redevelopment Director Cecile Petro at (219) 972-7598.

CPFA DESIGNATION

Clerk-Treasurer Michael Griffin was formally recertified and will maintain the professional designation of Certified Public Finance Administrator (CPFA).

Griffin first earned the designation in September 2000 and was the second person ever to receive this designation in Indiana and the first ever in Highland. He was recertified in 2005, 2010 and now in 2015. The certification requires reapplication every five years.

"What I most appreciate is how earning the designation serves to encourage me to refine my skills as a public finance officer and hopefully continually improve my service to the people of Highland," Griffin said.

CRIME WATCH MEETING

Learn about the latest crime trends at this month's crime watch meeting.

WHEN: 6:30 p.m. **NOV. 11**

WHERE: Highland Library

INFO: Call (219) 838-3184 or email sanderson@highland.in.gov.



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NEWS TIP? STORY IDEA?

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HONOR FLIGHT 'DAY TO REMEMBER' FOR LOCAL WORLD WAR II VETERAN

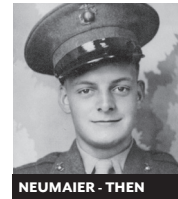
Nearly 70 years after Harry Neumaier convinced his mother to sign his enlistment papers, the World War II veteran was treated to the time of his life with a trip to Washington D.C. as part of an October Honor Flight.

"I was only 17, so I needed my mother's permission to join the Marine Corps," Neumaier recalled from his northside Highland home. "I joined in 1946 and was stationed in the Pacific. Although the war was technically over, we dealt with Japanese troops, who hadn't gotten the news. I remember eating lots of bananas and coconuts while I was there."

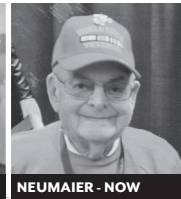
Nearly two years later, Neumaier was honorably discharged. Life went on. He married and raised six children.

He didn't know much about the Honor Flight program, but was convinced to go by his niece's husband, who served in Vietnam.

"I couldn't believe it," he said, his eyes misting. "There were crowds of people who shook my hand and thanked me for my service. I got to see my fellow soldiers and the WWII monument. It was a day to remember."



NEUMAIER - THEN



NEUMAIER - NOW

ABOUT HONOR FLIGHT

The first Honor Flight took to the skies in 2005. Since that first flight, thousands of veterans have been honored with a round trip from their home state to Washington D.C. Most states have at least one Honor Flight hub. Indiana has four.

INFO: To learn more or to apply to be part of an upcoming Honor Flight, visit honorflight.org.

VETERAN'S DAY CEREMONY

Join American Legion Post 180 and the Daughters of the American Revolution to remember our soldiers on Veterans Day. The event will feature a 21-gun salute, the laying of wreaths, singing of patriotic songs by Niall McShane and Georgianna Marks and addresses by Clerk-Treasurer Michael Griffin and former Clerk-Treasurer Paul Doherty.

WHEN: 11 a.m. Tuesday, **NOV. 11**

WHERE: Highway of Flags

INFO: Call Regent Sue Yamtich, (219) 614-3499.

HIGHLAND IS ONE OF MOST TAX-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES FOR RETIREES IN INDIANA

Highland has been named one of Indiana's most tax-friendly communities for retirees by Smart Asset, a New York-based financial technology company that assists individuals looking to transition out of the work force.

The company has developed a Retirement Tax Friendliness Index, which measures communities for retiree friendliness based on economic factors, such as local property tax rates and whether social security is subject to taxation.

Councilman Dan Vassar said assets, such as Lincoln Center, are a bonus.

"We are mindful when we make financial decisions for Highland how it is going to impact those who will be helping to pay the bills," Vassar said. "It is wonderful news that we are helping extended families stay together. We all benefit when we make our community affordable for those who are looking to retire."

TOP 10 TAX-FRIENDLY PLACES

Here are Indiana's most tax-friendly communities, ranked by a Retirement Tax Friendliness* Index, which takes into account local property and Social Security income taxes.

| RANK | | PROPERTY TAX PAID | SOCIAL SECURITY | RTF* INDEX |
|------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------|
| 1 | WESTVILLE | \$717 | \$0 | 73.32 |
| 2 | LA PORTE | \$800 | \$0 | 73.15 |
| 3 | MICHIGAN CITY | \$868 | \$0 | 73.02 |
| 4 | SOUTH BEND | \$944 | \$0 | 72.86 |
| 5 | GARY | \$978 | \$0 | 72.79 |
| 6 | LAKE STATION | \$1,029 | \$0 | 72.69 |
| 7 | MISHAWAKA | \$1,065 | \$0 | 72.61 |
| 8 | HAMMOND | \$1,327 | \$0 | 72.08 |
| 9 | EAST CHICAGO | \$1,347 | \$0 | 72.04 |
| 10 | HIGHLAND | \$1,631 | \$0 | 71.46 |

SOURCE: SmartAsset

Highland's 40th annual ... PUMPKIN PLOD

The Highland High School Cross Country Coach, who developed the idea that sparked the first Pumpkin Plod, will return this year to start the 40th annual Thanksgiving morning race.

John Bobalik, an avid runner and Highland High grad, was looking to inspire his team to train in the off-season when he approached the Highland Parks and Rec staff and the idea of the Pumpkin Plod was born.

According to Bobalik's records, on morning of Nov. 25, 1976, 105 racers gathered under sunny skies and slight winds. The race was open to anyone junior high age — and older. Today, the race attracts 1,200 runners and walkers. It has also inspired several other local communities to create Thanksgiving Day runs of their own.

What hasn't changed, though, is the 40-year tradition of giving out pumpkin pies to top finishers, which started when more than 75 high schoolers baked pumpkin pies in exchange for a free race shirt. 🍂



ABOUT THE RACE

Join your friends and neighbors for this holiday tradition.

WHEN: 9 a.m. **NOV. 26**

WHERE: Race begins at Kennedy Avenue and Jewett Street and ends at Lincoln Community Center.

INFO: Call (219) 838-0114 or visit www.highlandparks.org.

RUNNER REGISTRATION

- **ADVANCE:** Register by **NOV. 23:** \$20 with shirt, \$15 without shirt
- **RACE DAY:** \$25 with shirt, \$20 without shirt

WALKER REGISTRATION

- **ADVANCE:** Register by **NOV. 23:** \$15 with shirt, \$5 without shirt
- **RACE DAY:** \$20 with shirt, \$10 without shirt

SHOP WITH A COP

The Donald Sheppard Fraternal Order of Police #122 is seeking financial support from the community for this year's "Our Cops & Kids Shopping Program," in which Highland officers take children in need on a shopping spree.

Please make checks payable to the Donald Sheppard Lodge 122 and drop them off at the Highland Police Department, 3333 Ridge Road, Highland or mail them to Highland FOP 122 at P.O. Box 1743, Highland, IN 46322.

INFO: Call FOP member Ken Balon at (219) 838-3184 for more information.

LEAF COLLECTION ONLY

It's that time of year when Public Works switches from branch pickup to leaf collection. Please refrain from trimming your trees unless necessary.

There will be no branch collection in December, January or February. Residents can bring branches and other yard waste to the Public Works Facility located at 8001 Kennedy Avenue and dump them at no charge.

INFO: Call (219) 972-5083.

SUPPORT OPERATION SOS

Operation SOS - Support Our Service members - needs your donations of items and cash to send cheer boxes to service members who will be overseas during the holidays.

Donated items may be dropped off at Town Hall, Lincoln Community Center and Miles Bookstore on Jewett. A packing party will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. **NOV. 22** at Wicker Park Social Center.

Anyone wishing to contribute cash to help pay for shipping should make a check payable to: Operation SOS, P.O. Box 9308, Highland, IN 46322.

INFO: Visit operationsosnwi.com or call Colleen Aguirre at (219) 923-5799.

HIGHLAND STUDENTS 'COPY THE MASTERS' IN FALL ART DISPLAY

The stunning simplicity of landscapes and abstract still lifes in the style of Georgia O'Keefe, the surrealist musings of Joan Miro and pop art from Andy Warhol are all on display throughout the downtown business district through November, thanks to Our Lady of Grace students in grades K-8.

The students took to heart their assignment to study some of the most important artists of

their genre in order to master their techniques, see the world through their eyes and ultimately create a masterpiece of their own.

The exhibit, aptly titled, "Kids Copy the Masters," is part of a public art initiative developed by Highland Main Street. Curator Joanna Smith develops exhibits twice a year to encourage appreciation of locally created artworks and promote traffic at local retailers.



COMMUNITY BAND CONCERT

Celebrate the season with joyful tunes at the Highland Community Band's fall performance. There is no cost to attend.

WHEN: 7 p.m. Thursday, **NOV. 12**

WHERE: Monbeck Auditorium at Highland High
INTERESTED IN JOINING? Meet us during our weekly rehearsals at 7 p.m. Wednesdays in the band room at Highland Middle School.

INFO: For more information, please email Director Greg Jasek at maestroflute@att.net.

HIGHLAND BAND CRAFT FAIR

The best in arts and crafts will be showcased at the annual Highland Band Fall Craft Fair. The two-day event features unique vendors selling jewelry, fiber arts and more.

WHEN: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, **NOV. 14**

and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, **NOV. 15**

WHERE: Highland Middle School

INFO: Call Michelle Coon at (219) 670-7796 or email coon.michelle@gmail.com

COMMUNITY GARAGE SALE

Do you enjoy shopping for comic books, sports cards, autographs and other rare items? Roger Parker from P & P Collectibles will promote the card show in conjunction with the Community Garage Sale. Register to sell your items now!

WHEN: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, **NOV. 21**

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center

VENDOR FEES: \$26.75 for 10' X 10' space and \$42.80 for approximate 23' X 6' wall space.

INFO: highlandparks.org or (219) 838-0114.

FALL CRAFT & VENDOR SHOW

Get a start on your holiday shopping at the two-day winter craft show. Choose from candles, jewelry, handbags, home decor, handmade items, gourmet dips and more.

WHEN: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, **NOV. 28**

and from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, **NOV. 29**

WHERE: Lincoln Community Center

VENDOR FEES: \$53.50 per 10' x 10' interior space or \$85.60 per 23' X 6' wall space.

INFO: highlandparks.org or (219) 838-0114.

CRAFT FAIR & BAKE SALE

Start your Christmas shopping early at St. James the Less Christmas craft fair and bake sale featuring homemade goodies including pierogies, cookies, nut rolls, strudels and more! No advance orders. Vendors will have something for everyone from jewelry to holiday decor and crafts. Light lunch available in Santa's Snack Bar.

WHEN: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, **DEC. 5**

WHERE: St. James the Less parish hall, 9640 Kennedy Ave.

VENDORS: Limited number of spaces available. Call Diane at (219) 924-1778.

INFO: Call Helen at (219) 924-5783.



HOLIDAY FUN

Santa's March

Parade with Santa through downtown Highland ending at the Main Square Park Gazebo. Hot chocolate will be served. Parade applications are at Town Hall and Lincoln Center.

WHEN: 4:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 28

WHERE: Main Square Park

Tree-lighting Ceremony

Join us for the lighting of Main Square Park for the holiday season. Santa will have treat bags for good boys and girls. Food and beverage concessions will be available.

WHEN: 5 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 28

WHERE: Main Square Park

Christmas Carol Sing-along

Celebrate the holidays with the Highland Main Street sing-a-long featuring some of the season's top tunes from Jingle Bells to Here Comes Santa Claus! All are invited to participate, including church members, school children and clubs. Jodi Pesich, vocal instructor and manager at HGS Music, will lead us in song. RSVP by calling (219) 972-7598 so Highland Main Street can anticipate the number of groups/individuals participating.

WHEN: 5:15 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 28

WHERE: Main Square Park

Phone calls from Santa

Santa will call your child if you register at Lincoln Center by Dec. 2. Santa will talk to good little girls and boys about their Christmas wishes. Highland residents only.

WHEN: 6 to 8 p.m. Dec. 3 and 4 (you provide preference)

Home Decorating Contest

Decorate your home for the holidays and you could be eligible for cash prizes. Enter our contest and let the Park Board be the judge of the best decorated houses. Entry forms are available at Lincoln Center. Highland residences only. Each winner will receive a gift card – \$75 for First Place, \$50 for Second Place, \$25 for Best New Entry, Best Use of a Theme, Best Use of One Color, Third Place and Honorable Mention.

ENTRY DEADLINE: Dec. 6

JUDGING OF HOMES: 6 to 8 p.m. Dec. 10

AWARDS: Dec. 12 at Lincoln Center

INFO: (219) 838-0114 or highlandparks.org.